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Active Membership Pays!

BY ERIKA HIGGINS

During my holiday shopping I was drawn to online retailers offering free shipping. It is not that I am cheap; it is just that, like many

people, an incentive can be a major selling point for me. Following this same logic you would think that the offer of a free active member shirt would be just the incentive to get people involved in their chapter. For some, this offer does the trick. For others, it takes a little more. For instance, some of our chapter leaders are involved for the fellowship and friendships they gain; others because it gives them an impressive bullet point on their resume. Still other chapter leaders volunteer because they gain valuable experience that employers look for in a candidate. I would wager to bet that a few of our chapter leaders are involved for the personal development they gain, including social and public speaking skills. Of course, I wouldn't put it past a few people to be in it for the fame and fortune it yields.

At any rate, as leaders move, change careers, grow their family, or get involved with other volunteer work, we are faced with the ongoing need for new leaders. You may be surprised to know that each and every one of our officers and committee chairs has families, full-time jobs, hobbies, chores, and vacation time. They

all carve out time from negative space to meet once a month and discuss chapter business, keep the chapter gears turning, and ensure that the

"I wouldn't put it past a few people to be [Active Members] for the fame and fortune it yields."

rest of the members get value out of their dues. Then, we attend the regular chapter meetings as well.

It is challenging and rewarding all at once. You should give it a try to find out what you have been missing. If it is an active member shirt you want, this is a sure fire way to get at one. Or, if you are looking to increase your circle of friends, you couldn't ask for better. Maybe your resume is a little thin or you have been turned down for great job opportunities due to lack of experience. It could be that you are a bit of an introvert and need help breaking out of your shell. Then again, you could just be hungry for fame and fortune. Either way, there is no time like now to take advantage of that free shipping.

—MtM

ERIKA HIGGINS IS STC ORLANDO CHAPTER PRESIDENT, A SENIOR MEMBER, AND MEMBER OF THE A-SIG AND IDL SIG. ERIKA WORKS AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY.

Don't miss our next meeting...

**High School Writing Contest Awards
and Melissa Pellegrin Scholarship**

Tuesday, April 17, 2007 at 6:30 pm
Buttermilk's Country Restaurant
9001 S. US Hwy 17-92
Maitland, Fl
(407) 332-6446



Content and Convergence: Another Move Away From Content Silos

BY RAHEL BAILIE

When technical communicators think of content management, our minds naturally go to the world of structured authoring and XML content management. If someone were to map out the direction of structured authoring over the last couple of decades, it would be a relatively simple path, from DocBook SGML to DocBook XML to DITA XML, with a few detours along the way for specialized DTDs (such as S1000D, used for aircraft maintenance).

It's probably surprising, then, to realize that in the content management world, this type of content management is considered a niche market so

specialized that industry pundits haven't even bestowed on it a sexy acronym, and are just now starting to look for a common vocabulary to talk about it. There's a current attempt to call this "component content management" but whether the term will stick - well, as the term is being coined from outside the industry, that remains to be seen. So far, single-sourcing has been the most persistent terminology used, but even that only addresses a relatively small aspect of this type of content management which is known by terms such as structured authoring and XML content management (SAXCM is a bit of a racy acronym, but after all, SAX sells!).

Where the action is, both in terms of market size and in movement, is on the Web side. Web content management systems (WCMS) are used not only for Web sites but intranets, extranets, and portals - a fancy name for a site where some content is password protected, and sometimes different content is served up, depending on the role of the person coming to the site or logging in. Variants of these Web systems are also used for e-learning, knowledge management, collaboration, e-commerce, and a host of related applications - but

"Now, we are entering a new phase where collaboration tools, social networking tools, and tools barely entering the market are ready to change the landscape yet again."

let me return to my premise.

The systems used for marketing purposes have their own entourage to support their functions. There are Digital Asset Management (DAM) apps to handle all the still and moving images in low- and high-resolution, thumbnails, and print-quality downloads. To go with that, Digital Rights Management (DRM) apps are needed to control access and usage of the digital assets. Also part of the entourage is Search Engine Optimization (SEO) software that helps drive traffic to the site, and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) software that syndicates content from the site.

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Announcing the 2007 Melissa Pellegrin Scholar- ship Winners

BY PEGGY BIVINS

Congratulations to **Daniel Beck** and **Ashley Carney**, winners of the 2007 Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship. Daniel and Ashley, both UCF undergraduates, will receive their awards at the April 17 awards banquet.

Members of the chapter's Education Committee met last month to select the scholarship winners from a field of very worthy candidates. The members selected Daniel and Ashley based on their academic performance, writing ability, activities in the technical communication field, and understanding of and commitment to the profession.

Daniel will graduate from UCF in summer 2008 with a B.A. in English-Technical Writing and a minor in computer science. He joined STC recently and plans to attend the STC conference in Minneapolis. Dan has been on the Dean's List every semester since he began UCF in fall 2004.

Ashley, who has been busy compiling and composing a framework document detailing the chapter's 30-year history, will graduate this spring with a B.A. in English-Technical Writing. Ashley achieved three consecutive semesters of scholarly recognition on the UCF Dean's List. She is completing her second year as president of Sigma Tau Delta, UCF's international English honor society.

Previous winners of this award are: Sharron Wissert, Michele Damron, Melanie Woods, Ann Vogt, Kelli Cooper, Anna Gaal,

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Thank You, Dalton

BY KEVIN ANTHONY JONES

Totally engulfed in my work, I noticed that the latest *STC Memo to Members* issue had just arrived in my Inbox. Usually I would quickly move the email to my STC folder for future reading (which I honestly would never get to). Taking a minute away from the stacks and stacks of work, I decided to flip through the online version of the newsletter.

After glancing through the issue, I noticed a bright photo of Dalton Hooper and his (and my) favorite Disney character, Goofy. Suddenly, I had an urge to write an article. But not just any article. I wanted to write an article about Dalton. After all, it's Dalton who gave me my first break, and it's something that I'll never forget.

Back in 2004, when my collegiate career was nearing its end, I, like every other college student, had to make a decision on what to do with my life post-academics. I was part of the technical writing program at the UCF, and like so many of my classmates, I was looking for a job. I'd worked with other companies during the summer breaks, but only as an intern. One job offer had become available upon my eventual graduation, but it was too far away and I certainly didn't want to endure the daily commute.

So, with no true answers, I decided to attend a STC meeting. It was the first one I'd attended in months. My schedule and pending move from my collegiate apartment didn't allow me to attend as often as I wanted. I wasn't expecting much; I simply wanted to talk with some of the regular attendees and get a feel

for what options were at my disposal and what strategies I could use in order to get my foot in the door.

As luck would have it, the primary topic of the evening was about networking and tips to landing a job. "How about that," I thought. The objective of the meeting was to move from table to table, where paraprofessionals throughout the technical writing industry prepared mini-presentations ranging from, "How to Network," "Improving Your Resume," and "Tips for Interviewing." It was very informative and information that I most certainly would find useful.

As the meeting drew to a close, and we were only allowed to move to one last table, I decided to listen to the presentation about résumés. Since it's the most important tool – a one page, silent overview of your personality and work experience – I decided to head that way for some résumé tips. The presenter, Dalton Hooper, was a representative from Walt Disney World.

At the completion of his presentation, I decided to talk to him and ask him how I could improve my résumé. I offered for him to take a look at a printed copy in hopes that he would provide some good pointers. Instead, he looked it over, and, as I explained that I was looking for a job, decided to take my copy with him. He told me that I should forward to him an electronic copy and that he'd get back in touch with me.

A week later, I found myself at Team Disney sitting in a conference room along with my job recruiter, interviewing with Dalton for a technical writing position. Several

days later, I was tendered an offer and quickly began work. In fact, I began working on Disney projects before I was able to cross my tassel to signify my completion of college. I was finally a full-time professional.

But I wasn't the only one. Not only did Dalton take a chance on me, but he also added a few other recent UCF grads to his staff (including our very own editor, Cindy Skawinski)! Over the years, he added several more. Mixed between professionals with over 10 years of experience, Dalton's team included a new wave of professionals who simply needed a chance to kick-start their careers.

I stayed with Disney for about a year before moving on to another company, but I never lost contact with him or members of his team. When I decided that I needed a second job to improve my financial situation (not to mention increase my experience), I called Dalton, explained my situation, and within a few weeks, I was once again employed at Disney, working under Dalton.

And let me just say that I never take him or what he's done for me lightly. There are so many talented people in this world and in this field; they simply need a place to start – a place to get their feet wet. They need someone willing to take a risk. Dalton did that for me, and Dalton did that for many others looking for a way into the industry. And it's because of Dalton that we are all better professionals. I've learned so much during my duration with Disney (not to mention the lasting relationships with team members), working on many projects that I

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Upcoming Conferences and Seminars

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE
UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

April 11, 2007 *

Creating Interactive CBTs with Captivate-in Half the Time

Presenter(s): Kevin Siegel

Level: All Levels

If you are an instructional designer or technical writer, you have no doubt spent years attempting to perfect the art of teaching programs using fewer and fewer words. If you are in the business of educating, you know how difficult this job can be. These days, interactive lessons that can be viewed over the Internet, or from a CD, are all the rage. While there are many programs that can be used to capture a computer's screen, mouse action and audio, Adobe Captivate 2 is currently the undisputed market-leader.

During this fast-paced session you will learn some real-world tips and tricks that will enable you to produce Captivate projects at a blistering pace.



Content and Convergence (Continued from page 2)

Where this all becomes interesting is in the convergence of these two worlds – in the intersection of the structured authoring and WCMS worlds. We came from a world of content silos and progressed to a world of content management silos: SAXCM and WCM. But, many would say, what about Enterprise Content Management Systems (ECMS)? Doesn't that remove silos, and let an organization share and re-use content across the entire enterprise? Well – and you probably won't be surprised at the answer – yes and no.

If you consider an organization a closed system, you very well might look at ECM as a solution to getting content out of CMS silos. However, as the saying goes, "the devil is in the details" and the actual execution to get everyone's content across the enterprise readied for ultimate shareability does take a concerted, corporate-wide, executively-sponsored project to guarantee success. And yet, aren't we rapidly bypassing the ECM stage? Now, we are entering a new phase where collaboration tools, social networking tools, and tools barely entering the market are ready to change the landscape yet again.

The technical communication world is preparing for this world of convergence and integration with DITA, where topic-based content can be re-used within a document or a department, or shared with the rest of the organization or with partner organizations. The DITA standard allows content to travel, even boomerang, and be as usable when it arrives as when it

left its author. In the Web world, similar standards have emerged and continue to emerge in the forms of everything from microformats to entire mark-up languages as a way of making content transportable.

The next few years will hold some interesting developments for technical communicators. The convergence of content types will have far-reaching implications, and any predictions would need to change as user reactions to new technologies affect user expectations, the way that del.icio.us and digg has affected searching for information. It's certainly a time when we need to keep ourselves aware of industry trends and align ourselves more closely with other content developers that touch our work.

—MtM

RAHEL BAILIE IS PRINCIPAL OF INTENTIONAL DESIGN INC.,



FOCUSING ON PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FOR COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS, AND CONTENT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT IN STRATEGY A CONSULTING

GROUP, A MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONSULTANCY HELPING ORGANIZATIONS FIND EFFECTIVE WAYS TO MANAGE CONTENT AS VALUABLE CORPORATE ASSETS. STRATEGY A IS HOLDING A CONFERENCE IN VANCOUVER ON NOVEMBER 8-10, 2007 ON THE THEME OF CONVERGENCE AND INTEGRATION: CHANGING THE CONTENT MANAGEMENT LANDSCAPE. WITH REPRESENTATION FROM THE VARIOUS CM INDUSTRY SEGMENTS, PRACTITIONERS WILL BE ABLE TO EXPLORE THE VARIOUS WAYS THAT CONTENT MANAGEMENT WILL AFFECT THEM, BOTH SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM.

Announcing the 2007 Melissa Pellegrin Scholarship Winners

(Continued from page 2)

Mireille Shebbein, Rudy McDaniel, Christina Payne, Jason Nichols, Ana Marichal, Bonnie Spivey, Cynthia Hauptner, Robert Stultz, Melanie Trickey, Carrie Avery, Peggy Bivins, Alex Garcia, Heather Stearns, Rachel Eichen, and Jen Juneau.

The Orlando Chapter founded the Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholar-

ship Fund to honor and preserve the memory and generous spirit of their valued friend and professional colleague, Melissa Pellegrin. Melissa, an exceptional student who earned an Orlando Chapter undergraduate scholarship, was a 1994 UCF graduate and a member of the Orlando Chapter. Her commitment to excellence was evident in the quality of her academic and professional work. She worked as a technical communicator with The Resource Center, Inc. in Tampa until her untimely death in April 1997.

**Want to be
In the Know?**

Join our *LISTSERV!*

STC-Orlando's discussion list offers access to hundreds of professionals and is an easy way to stay informed about chapter meetings and events.

E-mail djones@ucf.edu to sign up.

A percentage of your purchases from the following Web sites is returned to the Orlando chapter:



**Love pizza as much
as you love STC?**

Join us Tuesday,
April 10 at

PIZZERIA UNO
4120 E Colonial/SR 50 East
Orlando, FL 32803

Order take-out or dine-in,
present the coupon
(it's right over there! →),
and the STC Orlando
Chapter will receive a
portion of your purchase.



A Tasty Way To Raise Dough.

Uno will donate up to 20%
of your check to:

To Benefit: Orlando Chapter STC

Fundraiser Date: April 10, 2007

Valid only at:

4120 East Colonial Drive
(S.R. 50 East)
Orlando
407-896-7404

Please present this certificate at the time of payment to have 20% of your check's value, excluding tax and tip, donated to the organization above.

Not to be used with other coupons or discounts. Tickets are not to be distributed in the restaurant or within the perimeter of the parking areas.

Valid for date listed above.

Getting Yourself Hired

Lesson 2: A Game of Inches

BY DALTON HOOPER

As much as we would like to believe we are hired based strictly on our skills and experience relevant to the position, it is almost never the case. It is more often the accumulation of many "little" things, not directly related to the content of our resume that puts us out in front of the other candidate.

Life isn't fair -- and neither is the hiring process

There are plenty of things that are absolutely beyond your control during the hiring process, such as:

- the quality of the other candidates.
- the quantity of other candidates.
- the competency of the interviewer.
- the quality of the job ad.

Although these things can affect whether you will be the successful candidate, don't waste valuable time and energy obsessing over them. Although extremely unfair, just move on to the things over which you *can* exert influence -- which is not to say that the things over which you *do* have influence are fair, either. They are simply things over which you have influence.

Fair and unfair advantages

Obviously, there are many things that can figure into the hiring manager's decision over which you have direct control. Some are fair advantages; some are not. For the sake of this discussion, I define a "fair" advantage as being an

"...there are many things that can figure into the hiring manager's decision over which you have direct control. Some are fair advantages; some are not."

aspect of the hiring process which should rightfully enter into the hiring manager's decision about you. I define an "unfair" advantage as being an aspect of the hiring process that, in an *ideal* world, would not affect the outcome, but in the *real* world does anyway.

Some "fair" advantages may include:

- the GPA you earned in college.
- the amount of your relevant job experience.
- the quality of your writing samples.
- active membership(s) in relevant professional organizations.

Some "unfair" advantages may include:

- the way you dress for the interview.
- whether or not you are on time for the interview.
- your demeanor throughout the interview:
- whether or not you smile.
- if you appear more interested in what you can do for the prospective company or what it can do for you

- if you appear to be specifically interested in acquiring this particular job or if you appear to just be looking for a job – any job
- if you appear over or under-confident
- if you are rude to the receptionist
- a friend or relative, who works for the company, put in a "good word" for you.
- a common interest you share with the interviewer (golf, children of the same age, etc.) that you exploited.
- if you sent a thank you message after the interview

While you may or may not agree that these "unfair" advantages should enter into the final hiring decision, the fact is that they nearly always do! In fact, it is quite possible that you may actually have a lesser list of "fair" advantages than a competing candidate, but end up being the one selected, based on your accumulation of "unfair" advantages!

Yes, it is true that it may actually be illegal to hire a lesser qualified candidate for certain positions, but rarely is a hiring manager going to admit, or even believe, that they should have selected someone else. It is perfectly acceptable, in most

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Thank You, Dalton

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otherwise would never have been able to experience.

Plus it's actually pretty cool working for a mouse!

So as I sat at my desk flipping through the latest issue of *Memo to Members*, a light bulb went off in my head. Sometimes we take things for granted and because of the nature of business, appreciation is often overlooked. But as soft spoken as I may be, I never forget those who have helped me along the way. As I continue to gain experience and move up the perennial corporate ladder, I'm always reminded of where my professional career started. As the late Walt Disney used to say, "It all started with a mouse."

For me, it all started with a mouse and a great person who took a chance on a young student looking for a job.

So on behalf of myself and every other UCF grad who got a break in the technical writing industry through Walt Disney World, we say thank you Dalton!

KEVIN ANTHONY JONES IS AN IT ANALYST FOR WALT DISNEY WORLD AND AN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER FOR CARLEY CORPORATION IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA.



Getting Yourself Hired

(Continued from page 6)

cases, for a hiring manager to take into consideration factors beyond the strictest evaluation of relevant skills and experience. The hiring manager is allowed to evaluate how they perceive you will fit into the work group or team by determining whether you are a creative, "out of the box" thinker or a traditionalist (either may be optimal for their environment).

As the time-worn analogy goes, "If two people applied for the same job, each having equal skills, knowledge, and experience, and each performing equally well in the interview with the only difference being that one dressed better than the other, who would get the job?"

The hiring process is a game of inches. Gather all you can.



DALTON HOOPER WORKS FOR WALT DISNEY PARKS AND RESORTS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. UNTIL RECENTLY, DALTON WAS THE DOCUMENTATION PROJECT MANAGER,

DIRECTING A TEAM OF TECHNICAL WRITERS. HE CAN BE REACHED AT DALTON.HOOPER@DISNEY.COM.

STC's 54th Annual Conference: Technical Communication Summit

NEWS FROM STC

Less than six weeks and counting! Have you registered yet for the Annual Conference? Have you told co-workers and associates to register too? You still have time... **May 4** is the deadline to take advantage of the advance member rate of \$795 (USD).

Whether you attend to learn new skills, explore hot topics, or network with the best, this year's Conference features something for everyone, including:

100+ education sessions

5 new Certificate Programs

evaluation workshops

5 Institutes (or conferences within a conference)

4 one-day Pre-Conference Workshops

the EXPO

2 keynote speakers (Simon Singh and Ze Frank)

For the latest information about the Conference and to register with the special advance rate, visit <http://www.stc.org/54thConf/index.asp> today.

Hotel reservations must be made by **April 13**. Book for your stay at <http://www.stc.org/54thConf/lodging/index.asp>.

See you in Minneapolis!

—MtM

If You Missed Our January Meeting...

BY CINDY SKAWINSKI

If you missed our **January** meeting, you missed a presentation by the "iconic" Patrick Hofmann on visual documentation. Held at the student union at UCF, the annual STC-UCF partnership meeting provided an excellent glimpse into the future of communication. As Mr. Hofmann explained, visual documentation, or documentation that exists almost entirely of pictures rather than words, is a solution for internationally-distributed documentation that can't feasibly be translated into all of the necessary languages.

To create visual documentation, communicators first design storyboards using words to describe the process. The storyboard is tested for usability, and then the first drafts of the illustrations are created to visually describe the confirmed content.

Usability testing is essential to creating visual documentation. Mr. Hofmann described a number of issues that visual documentation specialists run into during the design process:

- Pictures can have too much detail, distracting users from the most important content.
- The need for standards in pictures, such as consistent color, line weight, and text styles, is frequently overlooked.
- Pictures are often recycled inappropriately across different types of media, leading to both resolution issues and decreased usability.

Symbols, a key element of visual documentation, are particularly tricky to create. Mr. Hofmann said that symbols are always ambiguous or misunderstood. The meaning of a symbol frequently changes across cultural groups, with some symbols even offending parts of the intended audience. The age of the audience

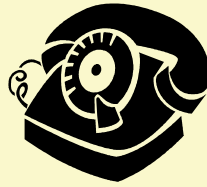


Figure 1

Although *MtM* readers don't have a problem recognizing this symbol, a child growing up in the age of cell phones might not recognize this icon of a rotary phone. To create more effective documentation, symbols must be relevant to all members of the document's audience. Usability testing is the most effective way to create successful visual documentation.

also plays a key role in the interpretation of symbols. Symbols that make sense to adults, for instance, may be too outdated for children to understand. See Figure 1 for an example.

As Mr. Hofmann pointed out, today's global marketplace has a growing need for international documentation. Visual documentation is an efficient, cost-effective method of reaching all of the members in a worldwide audience.

However, if not properly researched and tested, visual documentation can be as useless as documentation in a foreign language.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT VISUAL DOCUMENTATION, YOU CAN CONTACT MR. HOFMANN AT PHOFMANN@NORMAL.COM. HE IS ALSO PRESENTING "POLISHING YOUR PICTURES: CREATING AND EVALUATING USABLE GRAPHICS FOR GLOBAL AUDIENCES" AT STC'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE, THE TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION SUMMIT, IN MAY.



Our VP, Kelli Pharo, presents Patrick Hofmann with a token of our appreciation



Some UCF folks met with Patrick for dinner on the Monday before the meeting -- Karla Kitalong, Maggie Boreman, Jane Moody, and Gail Lippincott (photographer)

If You Missed Neil Perlin's Workshop...

BY DALTON HOOPER

We had an exciting opportunity during the month of February 2007. Neil Perlin, one of the world's most



experienced help consultants and trainers; the creator and manager of the *Beyond the Bleeding Edge* stem at STC's annual conference; and an Associate Fellow of STC, was in Orlando vacationing. While in town, he agreed to conduct a one-day workshop for our membership.

Neil offered us a couple of choices and a poll was taken among our membership to determine our preference. As a result, Neil conducted his one-day workshop, *Creating Simulations and CBT Using Adobe Captivate*:

"For years, software training was primarily text-based... paste a screen shot into a Word document, add some text with descriptions and instructions, and voila!

The results worked, but think how much more effective it could be to have someone actually "walk you through the steps" on the screen. That's where *Captivate* comes in, letting you create that "someone".

Captivate lets you create simulations and CBT (Computer-Based Training) inexpensively and quickly. It lets you capture what's on the screen as you perform some software-based task, save those screen shots as a "filmstrip", add explanatory and

instructional captions, special effects, and interactivity features to make users think they're using the software, and play the result back as a "movie." It's a deceptively simple but powerful tool that lets you create movies for use as demos, marketing presentations, tutorials, even fairly sophisticated eLearning. And, compared to most other CBT authoring tools, it's quick and easy to learn and only costs about \$500."

This one-day, hands-on seminar was aimed at trainers, training developers, marketing staff, disaster recovery personnel, and usability testers who need to quickly get up to speed on the mechanics, design, and planning required to create training movies using *Captivate*. The only prerequisites are a basic knowledge of *Windows*, *Internet Explorer*, and PC skills in general.

The price included a workbook with slides and code samples, as well as a continental breakfast and deli sandwich lunch.



A well-learned and a well-fed group



Neil lecturing while "on vacation"



If You Missed Our February Meeting...

BY DALTON HOOPER

The **February** meeting was a hoot! Our own Paula O'Brien gave a fascinating presentation on "Communication, Teamwork, and Synergy."

The highlight of the evening was when teams were formed and "strange concoctions" were created. I'll just let the pictures do the talking...



Paula O'Brien talks to the attendees about Communication, Teamwork, & Synergy



The attendees receive their instructions.



W.C. and Mark try their best while Paula observes.



Mark Wray mixes up a batch of ???.



Jon Kessler tries to "give it away."

If You Missed Our March Meeting...

BY DALTON HOOPER

The **March** meeting was our annual "Employment" theme. The format was somewhat different this year as opposed to years past.

Rather than the usual progression-type event where local employers set up tables and dialogue with small groups of attendees for 20-minute rotations, this year's format had an employment panel consisting of three locals with expertise in three distinct aspects of the employment process: The foundational schooling, the grooming and marketing of the candidate, and the encounter with the prospective employer.

Panelist #1: Dr. Dan Jones

An STC Fellow and Professor of English at the University of Central Florida, Dan Jones has taught a wide variety of technical communication courses for the past 28 years, including 24 years at UCF. He has supervised numerous internships, informed countless students about job opportunities and assisted many with the job process, helped thousands of students with all kinds of job correspondence, and has done consulting for 25 companies in all kinds of industries.

Panelist #2: Michelle Blanford

Michelle Blanford has held various leadership roles within the IT recruiting industry around Central Florida for the last 12 years. Starting out as a Technical Recruiter/Account Manager with Renaissance Worldwide, Inc. and later with Aquent, Michelle was promoted to National Account Manager in 2000 and eventually promoted to Area Manager in 2003. In January of 2007, Michelle accepted a po-

sition with TekPartners as a Market Director. Ms. Blanford is currently involved in opening TekPartners' Orlando-based office. Throughout her career, Ms. Blanford has been personally involved in the recruitment, grooming, and hiring of technical communicators at all levels. The expertise Michelle brought to the panel was in how to best mar-



ket, prepare, and present oneself as a candidate for a technical communicator position

Panelist #3: Dalton Hooper

Dalton Hooper has held various leadership roles for 25 of his more than 40-year career in communications and entertainment. After retiring from AT&T in 1998 after 32 years, Dalton joined The Walt Disney Company in Orlando, Florida. From 2001 until January 2007,

Dalton directed a team of technical writers in their Information Technology department.

During this time, he had occasion to review hundreds of resumes, conduct more than 300 interviews, and hire more than 50 technical writers to work

on his team. The expertise Dalton brought to the panel was an understanding of the hiring process from the hiring manager's point of view.



Dalton Hooper, Michelle Blanford, & Dr. Jones address the attendees' questions about employment.



Memo to Members

Spring 2007 • Volume 5, Issue 6

Memo to Members is published monthly and distributed via the STC Orlando Chapter LISTSERV. View archived issues at our Web site: www.stc-orlando.org/newsletter/newsltr.asp. Comments and letters of opinion are always welcome and should be directed to the editor.

The *Memo to Members* invites writers to submit articles to be considered for publication. By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to this newsletter to run the article or post it online, and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Copyright is held by the writer. In your cover letter, please let the editor know if your article has run elsewhere, and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications. Permission to reprint any material herein is given provided that credit is given and a copy of the issue is sent to the editor.

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From the Editor's Desk...

Allow me to step in here this month and say a few words. Our regular editor, Cindy Skawinski, has been a bit snowed under lately and I agreed to take the helm for awhile.

Like most of you, I never really thought much about what was involved in the compilation and publishing of our newsletter — until I tried it myself!

I quickly discovered it is a job that calls for experience in journalism, graphic design, diplomacy, leadership, editing, babysitting, creative writing, teaching, data gathering, project management,

organization, rocket science, and brain surgery.

Fortunately, that's what we technical communicators do nearly every day. So, if you want an opportunity to hone many skills at once, consider helping out with the newsletter. You

can write an article, or help with proofreading and editing.

Your Orlando STC community also has many other opportunities available.

Ask how you can help.

—Dalton Hooper



Corner of Distinction

Jon Kessler

Kudos to Jon Kessler, our beloved webmaster!

But did you know that Jon is also the guiding force behind our annual High School Writing Competition Awards program? Come see Jon in action at our upcoming April 17 meeting.

